

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Street-lighting in urban areas supports multiple objectives. Its primary and fundamental objective is to provide the light necessary for safe passage of motorists and pedestrians at night. In addition, it is an important aesthetic element of the street furniture and its appearance often represents the significance and history of the area. Therefore, it is important that the streetlight fixtures follow certain standards based on the needs and settings of the area. In the past, the lack of a policy has resulted in non-uniform lighting hardware and illumination levels throughout the city.

Washington is the nation's capital with an area of 68.25 square miles and a population of approximately 600,000. Pierre-Charles L'Enfant designed the City's basic layout and plan, which features from the Capitol building to parks. In terms of the City's importance, it houses the US Capitol, the White House, the Supreme Court, and many other important government buildings, national landmarks, museums and memorials. In terms of look, this city is very different than other US cities with its characteristic magnificent buildings with limited heights and many historic areas. This uniqueness and the historic significance of the City must be reflected through all aesthetic elements including the appearance of streetlights.

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) undertook a study entitled *District of Columbia Streetlight Policy and Design Guidelines* to develop a uniform streetlight policy throughout the City indicating its significance. This study is aimed at providing the District with well-defined guidelines for future streetlight construction. The guidelines will be implemented in an evolutionary fashion along with future road construction and streetscape projects. The streetlight pole replacements will follow the defined guidelines rather than the usual practice of replacement-in-kind. This document outlines a policy and not a regulation or standard.

The study involved conducting research, interviewing vendors and various state agencies, reviewing existing DDOT practice and finally coming up with the recommendations. DDOT formed a panel of advisors to serve on a committee to steer this study. The committee was formed from members of relevant agencies, including citizen groups' representation. The committee held a series of meetings and directed the course of the study, made evaluations of various alternatives and provided specific recommendations on various aspects of the streetlight policy issues. The research summary and the advisory committee meeting minutes are presented in Appendix A. Finally, the draft policy was kept open to public comments for a period of time. This process included citizens' comments, review by other agencies and a public meeting.

This document contains a set of strategic policy recommendations for future construction of streetlights in the District of Columbia. It includes four other chapters in addition to this Introduction (Chapter 1) and an Appendix A. Chapter 2 presents background information and basic definitions for streetlights. Chapter 3 describes the existing DDOT practice. Chapter 4 describes the illumination standards recommended for the District. Chapter 5 discusses the streetlight hardware recommendations and presents a simplified streetlight

design illustration of roadways going through various types of areas. Chapter 6 discusses the recommendations for future.